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Y Montez, A. 1449  
USA EF

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**page 8**

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A. CIRCUMSTANCES OF LOSS: CASE 1449 INVOLVES THE 24 MAY 1969 LOSS OF A U.S. SPECIAL FORCES SOLDIER, COMMANDING A CIVILIAN IRREGULAR DEFENSE GROUP (CIDG) COMPANY, WHEN HIS UNIT ENGAGED A LARGE ENEMY FORCE IN RO KOI VILLAGE, SA THAY DISTRICT, KON TUM PROVINCE. DURING THE FIGHTING, THE SOLDIER WAS BADLY WOUNDED AND SUBSEQUENTLY DIED. THE SOLDIER'S BODY WAS LEFT BEHIND AS HIS UNIT WITHDREW. THE SOLDIER IS STILL UNACCOUNTED FOR.

B. SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATION: ON 24 NOVEMBER 2008 DURING JFA 09 1VM (93RD JFA), THE INVESTIGATION TEAM (I.T.) SURVEYED 500 METERS IN AND ALONG BOTH SIDES OF THE DAK RO MAO STREAM CONCERNING CASE 1449 IN RO KAI VILLAGE, SA THAY DISTRICT, KON TUM PROVINCE, WITH NEGATIVE RESULTS.

C. POSSIBLE REMAINS/MATERIAL EVIDENCE/IDENTIFICATION (ID) MEDIA: THE I.T. DID NOT RECOVER OR RECEIVE ANY MATERIAL EVIDENCE, ID (ID) MEDIA, OR POSSIBLE HUMAN REMAINS WHILE INVESTIGATING CASE 1449.

## 2. DETAILS OF INVESTIGATION.

### A. PURPOSE:

(1) SURVEY THE AREA NEAR GRID COORDINATES (GC) 48P YB 898 106 IN RO KOI VILLAGE (XAX ROWF KOWI), SA THAY DISTRICT, KON TUM PROVINCE. EXPAND THE SEARCH NORTH FOR APPROXIMATELY 500 METERS ALONG THE EAST SIDE OF THE DAK RO MAO STREAM FOR EVIDENCE OF REMAINS OR POSSIBLE BURIAL SITE (ACCOMPLISHED; SEE PARA 2.E., BELOW).

(2) QUESTION RESIDENTS IN RO KOI VILLAGE (XAX ROW KOWI) AND IN DAK DE VILLAGE (XAX ZAK DEE), BOTH IN SA THAY DISTRICT (HUYEENJ SA THAAFY). DETERMINE IF ANYONE IN THE VILLAGES HAS INFORMATION CONCERNING A BATTLE IN THE AREA AROUND 1969, OR REGARDING REMAINS, PERSONAL EFFECTS, OR BURIAL SITES (PARTIALLY ACCOMPLISHED; SEE PARA 2.D., BELOW).

B. ON 18 NOVEMBER 2008, THE I.T. ARRIVED IN KON TUM PROVINCE TO INVESTIGATE SIX CASES.

### C. TEAM COMPOSITION:

#### (1) U.S. CONTINGENT:

(A) [REDACTED] JPAC, TEAM LEADER.  
 (b)(3) (B) [REDACTED] JPAC, ASSISTANT TEAM LEADER.  
 (b)(6) (C) [REDACTED] JPAC, SURVEY LEADER/ANTHROPOLOGIS  
 T. (D) [REDACTED] JPAC, INVESTIGATOR/LINGUIST.  
 (E) [REDACTED] JPAC, INVESTIGATOR/LINGUIST.  
 (F) [REDACTED] JPAC, INVESTIGATOR/LINGUIST.  
 (G) [REDACTED] JPAC, INVESTIGATOR/LINGUIST.  
 (H) [REDACTED] JPAC, LIFE SUPPORT  
 INVESTIGATOR (LSI).

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(b)(3)  
(b)(6)

(I) [REDACTED] JPAC, MEDIC.

(J) [REDACTED] JPAC, EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE

DISPOSAL (EOD) TECHNICIAN.

(2) VIETNAM OFFICE FOR SEEKING MISSING PERSONS (VNOSMP)  
CONTINGENT:

(A) SRCOL PHAM VAN TUYEN (PHAMJ VAWN TUYEEN), TEAM  
LEADER.

(B) MR. VU VAN DUONG (VUX VAWN ZWONG), TEAM MEMBER.

(C) MR. TRAN QUOC TOAN (TRAANF QUOOCS TOANF), TEAM  
MEMBER.

(D) MR. TO NGOC TUYEN (TOO NGOCJ TUYEEN), TEAM MEMBER.

(E) MS. HO HUONG GIANG (HOOF HWONG GIANG), TEAM MEMBER.

(F) MR. NGUYEN TRUNG VIET (NGUYEENX TRUNG VIEETJ), TEAM  
MEMBER.

(3) KON TUM PROVINCE PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE CONTINGENT:

(A) MR. NGUYEN THANH DUOC (NGUYEENX THANH DWOCJ), TEAM  
LEADER.

(B) MR. NGUYEN THANH HA (NGUYEENX THANH HAF), TEAM  
MEMBER.

(C) MR. TRAN ANH DUNG (TRAANF ANH ZUNGX), TEAM MEMBER.

(D) MR. NGUYEN VAN QUYEN (NGUYEENX VAWN QUYEENF), TEAM  
MEMBER.

(E) MR. LE VAN BINH (LEE VAWN BINHF), BORDER PATROL TEAM  
MEMBER.

(4) SA THAY DISTRICT PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE CONTINGENT:

(A) MR. DINH DUY TIEN (DINH DUY TIEEN), TEAM LEADER.

(B) MR. LE DUC MY (LEE DWCS MYX), TEAM MEMBER.

(C) MR. HOANG VAN THUAN (HOANGF VAWN THUAANJ), TEAM  
MEMBER.

(5) RO KOI VILLAGE PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE CONTINGENT:

(A) MR. A TRUONG (A TRWONGF), TEAM LEADER.

(B) MR. A TUYEN (A TUYEEN), TEAM MEMBER.

(C) MR. LE DUY SON (LEE DUY SOWN), TEAM MEMBER.

(D) MR. A DON (A ZOWN), TEAM MEMBER.

D. ON 18 NOVEMBER 2008, THE I.T. MET WITH THE VNOSMP CONTINGENT  
AT THE INDOCHINE HOTEL IN KON TUM TOWN, KON TUM PROVINCE, TO DISCUSS  
THE INVESTIGATION PLAN. THE VNOSMP TEAM LOCATED THE SITE AND AGREED  
TO GUIDE THE TEAM THERE. THE VNOSMP TEAM ALSO CANVASSED THE  
REQUESTED VILLAGES WITH NEGATIVE RESULTS AND PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING  
CONFIRMATION LETTER (NOTE: TRANSLATOR'S COMMENTS ARE CONTAINED IN  
DOUBLE PARENTHESES):  
((BEGIN TRANSLATION))

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/\*\*\*\*\* BEGINNING OF SECTION 2 \*\*\*\*\*/

CONFIRMATION LETTER

DURING THE ADVANCE WORK FOR CASE 1449 IN RO KOI VILLAGE, SA THAY DISTRICT, KON TUM PROVINCE THE VNOSMP CANVASSED THE LONG TIME RESIDENT IN RO KOI VILLAGE AND DAK KE VILLAGE, SA THAY DISTRICT, KON TUM PROVINCE BUT DID NOT LOCATE ANYONE WITH KNOWLEDGE OF THE CASE LOSS REGARDING THE 1969 INCIDENT TO INCLUDE INFORMATION REGARDING HUMAN REMAINS, PERSONAL ITEMS, AND/OR BURIAL LOCATION.

2 DECEMBER 2008

IN LIEU OF VNOSMP IT

((SIGNED))

TRAN QUOC TOAN

(END TRANSLATION))

E. ON 24 NOVEMBER 2008, THE I.T. DEPARTED THE INDOCHINE HOTEL IN KON TUM TOWN AND DROVE NORTHWEST ON NATIONAL HIGHWAY 14 FOR THREE MINUTES THEN TURNED WEST ON PROVINCIAL HIGHWAY 675 AND DROVE FOR ONE HOUR AND FIFTY-FIVE MINUTES TO A VEHICLE DISMOUNT POINT (VDP) LOCATED AT GC 48P YB 88540 08995 (TEN SATELLITES, +/- FOUR METERS OF ERROR, AND 469 METERS OF ELEVATION - THE I.T. OBTAINED ALL GC USING A GARMIN GPSMAP 60CSX GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEM (GPS) RECEIVER, USING THE INDIAN THAILAND MAPPING DATUM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED). FROM THE VDP, THE I.T. WALKED NORTHEAST UP THE DAK RO MAO STREAM (KHE DAWK ROWF MAO) FOR THREE HOURS AND FORTY-FIVE MINUTES TO THE SOUTHERN EDGE OF THE SEARCH AREA AT GC 48P YB 89689 10187 (NINE SATELLITES, +/- FIVE METERS OF ERROR, AND 459 METERS OF ELEVATION) IN THE VICINITY OF THE RECORD OF LOSS LOCATION. THE I.T. PAINTED A LARGE BOULDER AND ADJOINING TREE WITH RED PAINT AND DESIGNATED THIS THE SOUTHERN EDGE SURVEY DATUM. FROM THIS POINT, THE I.T. CONDUCTED A 500 METER SURFACE AND SUBSURFACE SEARCHES USING ONE EXCALIBUR 1000 AND ONE SCHEIBEL METAL DETECTOR, TERRAIN PERMITTING, ALONG BOTH SIDES OF THE DAK RO MAO STREAM AS THE TEAM MOVED NORTH ALONG THE STREAM TO THE NORTHERN MOST POINT LOCATED AT GC 48P YB 89716 10691 (FOUR SATELLITES, +/- 16 METERS OF ERROR, AND 464 METERS OF ELEVATION). THE I.T. THEN ESTABLISHED A LARGE TREE AT THIS LOCATION AS THE NORTHERN MOST POINT SITE DATUM. THE SURVEY YIELDED NEGATIVE RESULTS OF ANY EVIDENCE OF REMAINS OR BURIAL SITE; THE MAJORITY OF THE TERRAIN ALONG THIS ROUTE WAS 40 TO 50 DEGREE SLOPES COVERED WITH BAMBOO AND THICK VEGETATION DROPPING STRAIGHT INTO THE STREAM THAT PREVENTED THE I.T. TO EXPAND THE SURVEY FURTHER OUT.

3. MATERIAL EVIDENCE: NONE.

A. RETAINED BY JPAC: NONE.

B. PHOTOGRAPHED AND LEFT IN PLACE: NONE.

C. POSSIBLE REMAINS: NONE.

4. SITE SURVEY RESULTS:

A. SITE-RELATED INFORMATION:

- (1) GEOPOLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS: RO KOI VILLAGE, SA THAY DISTRICT, KON TUM PROVINCE, SRV.
- (2) CARIS SITE NUMBER: (VM-02258).
- (3) MILITARY GRID REFERENCE SYSTEM (MGRS) GRID COORDINATES:
  - (A) 48P YB 89716 10691 (SIX SATELLITES, +/- 11 METERS OF ERROR, 464 METERS OF ELEVATION, AND INDIAN THAILAND DATUM).
  - (B) 48P YB 89292 10999 (FIVE SATELLITES, +/- NINE METERS OF ERROR, 465 METERS OF ELEVATION, AND WGS-84 DATUM).
  - (C) MAP GRID COORDINATES: 48P YB 897 107 (INDIAN THAILAND).

(4) MAP SHEET DATA: NAME: DAK MOT LOP; SHEET: 6538 III; SERIES: L7014; EDITION: 3-AMS, 1968.

(5) LANDOWNER, LAND RESIDENT, OR TENANT: SITE IS IN THE CHU MOM RAY NATIONAL PARK.

B. SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONSIDERATIONS:

- (1) SITE TYPE: SURFACE REMAINS SITE.
- (2) SITE SIZE: 500-X-40 METERS.
- (3) LANDFORM AND TOPOGRAPHIC SETTING: AREA SURVEYED IS WITHIN A DOUBLE/TRIPLE CANOPY JUNGLE OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TIMBER, WITH HEAVY BRUSH AND VINES. THE DAK RO MAO STREAM GRADUALLY INCREASES IN GRADE AS ONE ASCENDS FROM THE SOUTH NORTHWEST TO NORTHEAST. ON BOTH SIDES OF THE STREAM, THE BANKS FOR MOST OF THE 500 METERS SURVEYED, HAVE SLOPES THAT RANGE FROM LEVEL GROUND TO 40 DEGREES AND GREATER. AT THE NORTHERN EDGE OF THE SURVEYED AREA THE STREAM BANKS AND SURROUNDING GROUND ON BOTH SIDES OF THE DAK RO MAO BECOME LEVEL.
- (4) SITE DISTURBANCE AND LAND USE HISTORY: SINCE THE TIME OF THE INCIDENT, THE ENTIRE AREA HAS BEEN RELATIVELY UNDISTURBED AND DURING THE POST-WAR, KON TUM PROVINCE HAS DESIGNATED THE AREA A NATIONAL FOREST. THE DRY SEASON EXTENDS FROM APRIL TO NOVEMBER OF EACH YEAR.
- (5) SURFACE MATERIAL EVIDENCE: NONE.
- (6) INCIDENT-RELATED SURFACE FEATURES: NONE.
- (7) SOIL TYPE: LIGHT BROWN LOOSE AND LOAMY SOIL WITH SMALL ROCK INCLUSIONS.
- (8) RECOMMENDED SCREENING SYSTEM: DRY SCREENING.
- (9) MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT RECOMMENDATION: NONE.
- (10) UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE (UXO) OBSERVED OR REPORTED: NONE OBSERVED OR DETECTED WITHIN THE SURVEYED AREA.

(11) SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS: THE POTENTIAL PROJECT AREA IS WITHIN A PROTECTED NATIONAL FOREST.

C. LOGISTICAL AND OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:

(1) SITE ACCESSIBILITY: THE SITE IS ACCESSIBLE VIA A TWO HOUR DRIVE FROM KON TUM TOWN FOLLOWED BY A THIRTY MINUTE HIKE.

(2) DISTANCE TO THE NEAREST ROAD: 600 METERS.

(3) NEAREST POPULATED AREA:

(A) NAME: RO KOI.

(B) DISTANCE FROM SITE: 28 KILOMETERS.

(4) ESTIMATED AVAILABLE LABORERS: 100 PLUS.

(5) LANDING ZONE (LZ) RECOMMENDATION:

(A) LOCATION: 48P YB 89527 11285.

(B) DISTANCE TO SITE: 600 METERS.

(C) DISTANCE TO BASE CAMP: 700 METERS.

(6) BASE CAMP RECOMMENDATION:

(A) LOCATION: 48P YB 90121.11079

(B) DISTANCE TO SITE: 300 METERS.

(C) WATER SOURCE: BASE CAMP IS DIRECTLY ADJACENT TO THE DAK RO MAO STREAM.

(D) HOTEL AVAILABILITY: HOTELS ARE AVAILABLE IN KON TUM

/\*\*\*\*\* BEGINNING OF SECTION 3 \*\*\*\*\*/

TOWN, APPROXIMATELY A TWO-HOUR DRIVE FROM THE SITE.

5. PERTINENT LOCATION OR DATA CHANGES: NONE.

6. ANALYST COMMENTS:

A. DUE TO THE LENGTH OF TIME IT TOOK THE I.T. TO HIKE FROM THE VDP TO THE STARTING POINT FOR THE SITE SURVEY TO BEGIN AT THE RECORD LOSS LOCATION (SOUTHERN MOST POINT), AND DUE TO RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED BY THE TERRAIN AND VEGETATION IN THE SURVEY AREA, THE I.T. COULD NOT CONDUCT AN EXTENSIVE SURVEY. THE TIME CONSTRAINT WAS A DIRECT RESULT OF POOR ADVANCE WORK BY THE VNOSMP TEAM. INSTEAD OF TAKING THE SHORTER ROUTE DOWN TO THE STREAM, WHICH THE I.T. USED TO HIKE BACK UP TO THE MAIN ROAD, WHICH WOULD TAKE APPROXIMATELY 20-30 MINUTES, THE VNOSMP GUIDED THE I.T. ON THE LONGER ROUTE ALONG THE ACTIVE STREAM WITH THICK VEGETATION, WHICH TOOK THE I.T. MORE THAN THREE HOURS TO REACH THE SOUTHERN MOST POINT OF THE SITE. HIKING THE FULL LENGTH OF THE DAK RO MAO STREAM FROM THE SOUTHERN TO THE NORTHERN MOST POINTS OF THE SURVEY AREA ALLOWED THE I.T. TO CONDUCT A TERRAIN ASSESSMENT AND SUBSEQUENT ANALYSIS. THE SEVERE TERRAIN IN THE AREA ASSISTED THE I.T. IN IDENTIFYING THE PROBABLE ROUTES WHICH THE SOLDIERS ACCOMPANYING THE UNACCOUNTED-FOR SOLDIER, COULD HAVE USED, AND ALSO IDENTIFY POSSIBLE HIDE SITES ALONG THE STREAM.

B. PRELIMINARY FIELD ANALYSIS OF WARTIME RECORDS, MR. BOURKE'S

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REPORT (REF A), AND TERRAIN ANALYSIS, SUPPORT THE IDEA THAT THE MOST LIKELY AREA REFNO 1449-0-01 WAS CACHED WAS IN A LARGE FLAT AREA ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE DAK RO MAO STREAM IN THE VICINITY OF GC 48P YB 897 107; ANOTHER POSSIBLE AREA IS A LARGE FLAT AREA ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE STREAM JUST SOUTH OF THIS LOCATION. A FUTURE I.T. SHOULD CONDUCT EXTENSIVE SURVEYS IN BOTH OF THESE AREAS.

C. THE I.T. ALSO IDENTIFIED A MUCH SHORTER ACCESSIBLE ROUTE INTO THE SITE FROM A MUCH CLOSER VDP. THE I.T. RETURNED TO THE ROAD ON THE RIDGE LINE WEST AND ABOVE THE STREAM FROM A POINT IN THE VICINITY OF GC 48P YB 89598 10389 (SIX SATELLITES, +/- SEVEN METERS OF ERROR, 465 METERS ELEVATION) UPSLOPE TO THE ROAD AND A RECOMMENDED FUTURE VDP AT GC 48P YB 89215 10662 (FIVE SATELLITES, +/- FIVE METERS OF ERROR, 585 METERS ELEVATION). TERRAIN ANALYSIS AND MR. BOURKE'S REPORT (REF A) SUGGEST THAT THIS AREA REPRESENTS THE PROBABLE ROUTE USED BY THE SOLDIERS ACCOMPANYING THE WOUNDED REFNO 1449-0-01 AS THEY MOVED OFF THE RIDGELINE DOWN TO THE DAK RO MAO STREAM.

7. LSI COMMENTS: NO LIFE SUPPORT ITEMS RECOVERED OR OBSERVED DURING THIS INVESTIGATION.

8. EOD TECHNICIAN COMMENTS: NO UXO OBSERVED OR DETECTED THROUGHOUT THE SURVEYED AREA.

9. ANTHROPOLOGIST COMMENTS:

A. THE I.T. WAS ABLE TO LOCATE TWO RELATIVELY FLAT AREAS APPROXIMATELY 500 METERS NORTH OF THE SOUTHERN MOST POINT OR RECORD OF LOSS LOCATION OFF OF THE DAK RO MAO STREAM THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR ADDITIONAL SURVEY BY AN I.T. DURING A FUTURE JFA.

B. DUE TO THE FACT IT HAS BEEN 39 YEARS SINCE THE INCIDENT IT WOULD BE VERY UNLIKELY THAT ANY VIABLE SURFACE REMAINS WOULD STILL BE PRESENT DUE TO THE NUMEROUS ENVIRONMENTAL VARIABLES THAT WOULD INHIBIT THE SURVIVAL OF ANY BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL. IF THE REMAINS OF THE SF SFC WERE CACHED OR BURIED THEN THE CHANCES INCREASE FOR A POTENTIALLY SUCCESSFUL REMAINS RECOVERY PROVIDED FIRSTHAND WITNESS INFORMATION IS FORTHCOMING. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT ADDITIONAL RESEARCH BE CONDUCTED TO DETERMINE THE IDENTITY OF THE ENEMY UNITS (SQUAD, PLATOON, AND COMPANY LEVEL) THAT WERE IN CONTACT WITH THIS CIDG UNIT ON THE DATE OF THE INCIDENT. IT WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO LOCATE ANY SURVIVING VETERANS WHO CAN BE INTERVIEWED WHO MAY HAVE KNOWLEDGE ON THE DISPOSITION OR BURIAL LOCATION OF THE UNACCOUNTED FOR SOLDIER. THUS FAR, THERE HAVE BEEN NO REPORTS AT THE VILLAGE OR DISTRICT LEVELS BY LOCAL VILLAGERS OF THE DISCOVERY OF ANY MATERIAL EVIDENCE OR HUMAN REMAINS IN THIS AREA.

10. TEAM LEADER COMMENTS:

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A. CONCUR WITH ANALYST AND ANTHROPOLOGIST COMMENTS IN PARAGRAPHS 6 AND 9 ABOVE.

B. EXCEPT FOR THE ADVANCE WORK ISSUES LISTED IN PARAGRAPH 6.A., HOST GOVERNMENT COOPERATION/SUPPORT WAS GOOD AT ALL LEVELS.

ADMIN

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